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PROGRESS IN THE INCORPORATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND MEASURES UNDERTAKEN BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION TO ENSURE THAT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES ARE INCORPORATED INTO PROGRAMMES AND PROCESSES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman of Negotiating Group I

Progress in the incorporation of recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the activities of international organizations, and measures undertaken by the Administrative Committee on Coordination to ensure that sustainable development principles are incorporated into programmes and processes within the United Nations system

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development examined the report of the Secretary-General on this issue, 1/ as well as reports submitted by the Trade and Development Board and the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme. It took note of the initial measures taken within the United Nations system to implement Agenda 21 2/ and to incorporate the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in particular the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and

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1/ E/CN.17/1993/8.

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

Development, 3/ into programmes and processes within the United Nations system, including the establishment of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development. In this regard, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to continue to inform the Commission on the measures taken to ensure the effective functioning of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development in this area.

2. The Commission recognized the crucial role of the Administrative Committee on Coordination in ensuring effective monitoring, coordination and supervision of the involvement of the United Nations system in the follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Commission supported the recent decisions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to place the Conference follow-up issues high on its agenda and to undertake measures to streamline and reorganize its subsidiary machinery and other inter-agency coordination arrangements to achieve greater complementarity and synergy in giving practical shape to the programme areas of Agenda 21.

3. The Commission recognized the need for further enhancing inter-agency coordination in the United Nations system to ensure more cost-efficient, effective and result-oriented follow-up to the Conference, to avoid duplication and to ensure more efficient use of resources in the implementation of Agenda 21.

4. The Commission invited the Economic and Social Council and, through it, the General Assembly, to analyse and review, in the context of the ongoing process of revitalization and restructuring in the economic, social and related fields, the functioning of the intergovernmental machinery in relation to the implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the Conference, with a view to making it more responsive to these tasks, as well as to improving the complementarity in the work of their subsidiary organs, and making compatible their methodologies and data utilized. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to inform it at its second session of progress made in this field.

5. The Commission called upon all countries to maintain consistent positions in various governing bodies in order to achieve greater harmonization of policy direction within the system in relation to the implementation of Agenda 21 and other decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Commission emphasized its readiness to collaborate with the governing bodies of the United Nations system in harmonizing collective efforts towards the implementation of Agenda 21.

6. The Commission took note of the concerns expressed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination regarding the lack of funding to meet the new mandates stemming from Agenda 21, and, in the context of its decision on finance, requested the Economic and Social Council to invite all organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to provide to the Commission at its second session, through the Administrative Committee on Coordination, information regarding their financial needs and priorities that are relevant to

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3/ Ibid., annex I.

their specific responsibilities, taking into account the system-wide perspective in the implementation of Agenda 21 and other outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as it is developed by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development, bearing in mind agreements reflected in Agenda 21, in particular chapter 33 on the provision of financial resources to achieve sustainable development.

7. The Commission stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation between the organs, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations and major groups, under relevant United Nations rules of procedure. The Commission expressed support for the convening of inter-agency consultations with major groups, where specifically provided for in Agenda 21.

8. The Commission invited all international organizations, including international financial institutions, to undertake further measures to fully incorporate the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in their work programmes, and to provide it with further reports on their activities to follow up the Conference, focusing on clusters of its Multi-Year Thematic Programme of Work. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the reports requested in decision ___ [E/CN.17/1993/L.2/Rev.3], would, inter alia:

(a) Assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the relevant chapters of Agenda 21;

(b) Identify gaps and opportunities for cooperation, including cooperation with non-governmental organizations and major groups;

(c) Compare and assess the relevance, strength and usefulness of various programmes and activities undertaken by different international organizations;

(d) Clarify organizational responsibilities within the United Nations system and assess whether allocation of tasks adequately reflect the expertise and comparative advantage of different organs, programmes and organizations;

(e) Assess the progress made in reducing unnecessary duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources.

9. The Commission took note of the processes launched within the United Nations system to improve the coordination of programmes related to development data, and requested the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, to continue to formulate proposals regarding the Development Watch, envisaged in paragraph 40.13 of Agenda 21, as well as the elaboration of realistic, usable and easily understandable indicators, that would allow the Commission to assess the progress made towards sustainable development.

10. The Commission invited the Economic and Social Council to recommend to the General Assembly, in order to avoid duplication of reports, to discontinue the reporting requested by the General Assembly in resolutions 42/186 and 42/187 of

11 December 1987 on the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond and on the World Commission on Environment and Development, respectively.

11. The Commission decided that the format of the discussion on the progress made in the incorporation of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the activities of international organizations and measures undertaken by the Administrative Committee on Coordination to implement Agenda 21 and to incorporate the outcomes of the Conference, in particular the principles contained in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, into the programmes and processes within the United Nations system, should be improved and be focused on clusters of its Multi-Year Thematic Programme of Work and ensure a constructive dialogue between the Commission and representatives of international organizations.

12. The Commission invited relevant organizations of the United Nations system to participate, at the highest possible level, in the sessions of the Commission, taking into account the Multi-Year Thematic Programme of Work, in order to promote in-depth discussions on issues falling within their respective responsibilities.